



Guidance for DCR Soil and Water Conservation District Staff

DCR Conservation Planner
October 20, 2021

Step 1: Design your BMP in the DCR Conservation Application Suite.

Step 2: Review the Resource Query returns.

Step 3: Based on the type of DWR data returned; coordinate per the below. See contact list at end of document.

Step 4: Review the resource protection recommendations at the end of this document and implement them as appropriate.

A. Listed Species (federal* and/or state Threatened or Endangered wildlife)

**If your project has any federal nexus (funding, permitting), you should run the project through the USFWS*

Online Project Review process found at the following Link:

<https://www.fws.gov/northeast/virginiafield/endangered/projectreviews.html>

If the DCR Resource Query returns a “hit” (documented record of species within 2 miles of your project site) for a *listed wildlife species*, refer to the list below to determine IF you need to coordinate with DWR and if so, with whom (contact info at end):

Aquatic Species: ONLY coordinate with DWR when hits for listed aquatic species are returned IF your project includes instream work and/or earth disturbing work (including tree removal / grubbing) within 300 ft of the stream bank.

- Crayfish, mussels, snails: **Contact Brian Watson.**
- Fishes (not including Atlantic sturgeon): **Contact Mike Pinder.**
- Atlantic Sturgeon: **Contact Clinton Morgeson.**

Semi-aquatic species: ONLY coordinate with DWR when hits for listed semi-aquatic species are returned IF your project includes instream work, and/or work in wetlands, and/or earth disturbing work (including tree removal / grubbing) within 300 ft of the stream bank or wetland edge.

- Amphibians, wood turtles, bog turtles, eastern chicken turtles: **Contact JD Kleopfer.**

Birds: ONLY coordinate with DWR when hits for listed birds are returned IF your project includes woody vegetation removal (trees, shrubs), ground clearing, grubbing or other significant habitat modifications*. If habitat modification will be performed outside of

Virginia's resident and migratory songbird nesting season (nesting season: March 15 – August 31 of any year), coordination with DWR is not necessary.

- Loggerhead Shrikes, Peregrine Falcons, other listed birds: **Contact Sergio Harding.**
- Waterbirds, shorebirds (*for these species, habitat modifications to beaches, dunes, and shell rakes should be considered in addition to the above): **Contact Ruth Boettcher.**
- Birds of prey (other than peregrine falcons): **Contact Jeff Cooper.**
- Bald Eagles: To ensure protection of bald eagles in compliance with the Bald and Golden Eagle Act, we recommend using the Center for Conservation Biology (CCB) [Eagle Nest Locator](#) to determine if any active eagle nests are known from the project area. If active bald eagle nests have been documented from the project area, we recommend that the project move forward in a manner consistent with [state and federal guidelines for protection of bald eagles](#); and coordination, as indicated, with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding possible impacts upon bald eagles or the need for a federal bald eagle take permit.

Bats: IF VAFWIS returns a hit for a listed cave-hibernating bat coordinate with DWR per the below.

Projects located within the regulatory buffer placed around a designated hibernaculum or roost site for any listed bat: ALWAYS coordinate with DWR for any project type. To determine if your site is located within one of these buffers, please refer to the applications found at the links below and refer to the Virginia Fish and Wildlife Information Service (VAFWIS), as directed.

- Northern Long-eared Bats: **Contact Rick Reynolds.**
<https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/bats/northern-long-eared-bat-application/>
- Little Brown and Tricolored Bats: **Contact Rick Reynolds.**
<https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/bats/little-brown-bat-tri-colored-bat-winter-habitat-roosts-application/>
 - Best Management Practices for Conservation of Little Brown Bats and Tri-colored Bats: **Contact Rick Reynolds to develop a conservation plan to cover take associated with projects located within hibernacula buffers or within 150 ft of designated roost trees.**
https://dwr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/LBBA_TCBA_Guidance.pdf
- Gray Bats: In addition to the above, also coordinate with DWR when hits for Gray Bats are returned IF your project is located within the Tennessee River drainage AND within 100 feet of a bridge or large culvert upon which this animal may roost. **Contact Rick Reynolds.**
- Rafinesque's Eastern Big-eared Bats: Coordinate with DWR for projects including tree removal or timbering that are located within 2 miles of a documented record of this species. **Contact JD Kleopfer or Rick Reynolds**

Reptiles (other than those in "Semi-aquatic" section above): ONLY coordinate with DWR when hits for reptiles are returned IF your project includes work within suitable habitats as described below:

- Sea Turtles: Work on Atlantic Ocean beaches, and Chesapeake Bay shorelines, work in Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. **Contact Ruth Boettcher.**
- Eastern Glass Lizards: Work on beaches, dunes, associated shrublands and freshwater wetlands, particularly in Virginia Beach. **Contact JD Kleopfer.**
- Canebrake Rattlesnakes: Work in mature forested habitats in southeastern Virginia, particularly Chesapeake, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach. **Contact JD Kleopfer.**

Terrestrial Invertebrates: Coordinate with DWR when hits for terrestrial invertebrates are returned ONLY if your project includes ground disturbance (at or below plow line). **Contact Brian Watson.**

B. Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)

If the DCR Resource Query returns a “hit” (documented record of species within 2 miles of your project site) for a tiered species, follow the below for freshwater mussels. Otherwise, planners should reference the 2015 Wildlife Action Plan (available through www.bewildvirginia.gov) to determine what threats are known to the documented species, what suitable habitat for these species consists of and how to best protect them and their habitats from harm.

- Freshwater mussels: coordination with DWR is ONLY necessary if your project includes instream work and/or earth disturbing work (including tree removal / grubbing) within 300 ft of the stream bank. **Contact Brian Watson.**

C. DWR Coordination and Responses:

If you need to coordinate your project with DWR staff, please send an **email** to identified biologist and include the following:

- Lat/Long Coordinates of project centroid
- Boundary, shapefile, polygon of project site
- Project Description
- Map of BMPs propose for installation
- Pictures of areas proposed for BMPs
- Your contact information

If a response from DWR is not received within 30 days of submittal, you may document such and move forward as needed. No response from DWR does not constitute support of the project or clearance regarding potential impacts upon wildlife under DWR’s jurisdiction, it simply indicates a lack of time or staff to perform the review. Any response received from DWR staff will include necessary next steps.

D. Resource Protection Recommendations:

Stream buffers:

- We recommend preserving, planting, and/or enhancing an undisturbed naturally vegetated buffer of at least 100 ft on both sides of all intermittent or perennial streams including those known to support wild trout or anadromous fishes.
- We recommend preserving, planting, and/or enhancing an undisturbed naturally vegetated buffer of at least 200 ft on both sides of all perennial tributaries to waters known to support listed aquatic species.
- We recommend preserving, planting, and/or enhancing an undisturbed naturally vegetated buffer of at least 300 ft on both sides of waters known to support listed aquatic species.

Wetland buffers:

- We recommend preserving, planting, and/or enhancing an undisturbed naturally vegetated buffer of at least 100 ft on all sides of any wetland or vernal pool.
- We recommend no impacts upon wetlands or vernal pools known to support any listed species. We also recommend preserving, planting, and/or enhancing an undisturbed naturally vegetated buffer of at least 900 feet on all sides of any wetland known to support a listed species.

Colonial Waterbird Colonies:

- We recommend preserving, planting or enhancing, an undisturbed naturally vegetated buffer of at least 500 ft around any identified waterbird colonies (rookeries). This provides the colony with a line of sight and habitat buffer, providing nesting activity protection as well as habitat protection to ensure suitability for future nesting seasons.

E. DWR Contacts

DWR Nongame Taxonomic Expert Contact List

Use the table below to identify the appropriate contact to answer questions or provide information regarding nongame species, including listed and tiered species.

Reptiles/Amphibians:	
John (JD) Kleopfer 804-829-6703 John.Kleopfer@dwr.virginia.gov	
Birds:	
Jeff Cooper (raptors) 540-538-1021 Jeff.Cooper@dwr.virginia.gov	Sergio Harding (other nongame birds) 804-367-0143 Sergio.Harding@dwr.virginia.gov

Mollusks/Aquatic Invertebrates/Terrestrial Invertebrates:	
Brian Watson 434-525-7522 Brian.Watson@dwr.virginia.gov	
Fishes:	
Mike Pinder (except Atlantic sturgeon) 540-961-8387 Mike.Pinder@dwr.virginia.gov	Clint Morgeson (Atlantic sturgeon) 804-829-6580 Clinton.Morgeson@dwr.virginia.gov
Mammals:	
Rick Reynolds 540-248-9360 Rick.Reynolds@dwr.virginia.gov	
Eastern Shore: (birds, sea turtles, sea mammals)	
Ruth Boettcher 757-709-0766 Ruth.Boettcher@dwr.virginia.gov	

DWR Common Wildlife Species and Resources Contact List

Use the table below to identify a contact to answer any questions or provide information regarding common wildlife and/or wildlife-related recreation in your area. Link to DWR regional map: <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/vDWR-region-map.pdf>

DWR Region	Terrestrial Species	Aquatic Species	Lands/Facilities
I	David Norris 804-829-6580 David.Norris@dwr.virginia.gov	Clinton Morgeson 804-829-6580 Clinton.Morgeson@dwr.virginia.gov	Steve Living 804-829-6580 Steve.Living@dwr.virginia.gov
II	Matthew Overstreet 434-525-7522 Matthew.Overstreet@dwr.virginia.gov	Scott Smith 434-525-7522 Scott.Smith@dwr.virginia.gov	Pete Schula 434-252-7522 Pete.Schula@dwr.virginia.gov
III	Shannon Bowling 276-783-4860 Shannon.Bowling@dwr.virginia.gov	Jeff Williams 276-783-4860 Jeff.Williams@dwr.virginia.gov	Tom Hampton 276-783-4860 Tom.Hampton@dwr.virginia.gov
IV	Jaime Sajecki 540-248-9360 Jaime.Sajecki@dwr.virginia.gov	Stephen Reeser 540-248-9360 Steve.Reeser@dwr.virginia.gov	Ron Hughes 540-248-9360 Ron.Hughes@dwr.virginia.gov

Private Lands Wildlife Biologist Point of Contact:

Marc Puckett
 434-392-8328
Marc.Puckett@dwr.virginia.gov